



Biweekly Narrative Seafood Report (No: 5-2001):Korea

Prepared by Alaska State Trade Representative for Korea
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1. Global Prices of Tuna Skyrocket

Prices of tuna at global markets have been soaring due to the reported outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in several countries. Tuna had been trading at about US\$450 per ton in the Bangkok market last November, but has recently increased to the US\$900 level.

Dongwon F&B, a leading manufacturer of canned tuna, said Wednesday that it has been considering raising the price of canned tuna by 20% to 30%. Moreover, Dongwon Industries, an ocean-going fishing firm, explained that following the outbreak of the hoofed-animal disease, it has been unable to meet the growing demand for tuna. Demand from the United States and Britain has increased two-fold in recent months, the firm added.

(Source: the Chosun Ilbo, Seoul, South Korea, March 21, 2001)

2. FishRound elects CEO, starts business

Yesterday Samsung Corp. reported that Noh Sang-hong, a former executive director of the company, was elected president of FishRound Inc., a global fishery B2B marketplace it has launched in cooperation with a group of Korean, U.S., Japanese and European partners.

Timed to coincide with the inauguration of the new president, came the opening of business for FishRound and its Web site (www.fishround.com), Samsung said.

Established in Delaware, U.S., FishRound has attracted investments from Dongwon Industries of Korea, Nissho Iwai of Japan, Tablas Group and Euro

Logistic Service of Europe and Merrill Lynch of the U.S. It recently lured a Chinese fishery processing firm and plans to attract more partners.

FishRound aims to facilitate \$20 million worth of trading this month, \$100 million by June this year and \$250 million by the end of the year.

(Source: the Korea Herald, Seoul, South Korea, March 14, 2001)

3. The ever-serious fish supply problem from deep-sea fishing

Recently, the local deep-sea fishing industry's supply of fish has been seriously reduced, reflecting poor catch in the industry.

According to the Korean Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, the deep-sea fishing industry supplied 647,200 tons of fish during February 2001, which is a 39% decrease over the corresponding period of 2000:

Fish Supply to Korea by Deep-Sea Fishing Industry

Species	End-February 2000	End-February 2001	Growth Rate (%)
Total	105,989	64,702	-39
Squid	13,188	353	-97.3
Alaska Pollock	57,656	42,091	-27
Yellow Corvina	428	201	-53
Hair Tail	1,180	737	-37.5
Tuna	5,011	3,590	-28.4
Others	28,514	17,730	37.8

(Source: the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Seoul, South Korea)

4. Korea has almost no seafood stock for sale

As such popular species (Alaska pollock and mackerel) are out of stock, concerns have increased with the soaring fish prices caused by unstable demand and supply.

The insufficient stock is attributable to poor harvest by offshore fishing and deep-sea fishing.

Korea's stock of Alaska pollock has decreased by 53.8% to 36,102 tons as of end-February 2001, compared with the same period of 2000. The Pacific cod stock also reduced by 2,745 tons in February 2001, 58.9% down from the previous year.

Korea's Fish Stock

(Unit: ton)

Species	End-February 2000	End-February 2001
Alaska Pollock	78,220	36,102
Pacific Cod	6,677	2,745
Atka Mackerel	5,577	1,212
Skate	1,025	2,912
Blue Crab	3,403	6,795
Flounder	3,675	2,855

(Source: the Korea Fishery Times, Seoul, Korea, March 19, 2001)